News release

Climate Stabilisation Conference, Exeter 2005

4 November 2004

Defra today issued details of the conference announced by the Prime Minister in September to discuss scientific aspects of stabilising climate change, *Avoiding Dangerous Climate Change: A Scientific Symposium on Stabilisation of Greenhouse Gases*. The Met Office's Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research is delighted to be hosting the conference of around 200 internationally renowned scientists at its new headquarters in Exeter from 1-3 February 2005.

Work at the Hadley Centre covers many areas of climate change, but in particular focuses on what level greenhouse gas concentrations could rise to, before running the risk of major changes to the Earth's climate system.

Computer models are used to predict and quantify risk of possible changes, including:

- a melting of the Greenland ice sheet, which would raise sea levels by seven metres over a period of 1000 years or so, causing inundation of many of the world's largest cities
- the accelerated release of carbon dioxide and methane from natural systems, triggered by the warming resulting from man-made emissions, which in turn accelerates the warming process still further
- the increasing frequency of major heatwaves, such as that which affected Europe in 2003 and gave rise to an estimated 17000 excess deaths in the UK and France
- a collapse of the Gulf Stream, leading to a rapid cooling over the UK, although not as dramatic as portrayed by Hollywood in the film The Day After Tomorrow

David Rogers, Chief Executive of the Met Office said, "Climate change is an issue of utmost importance. The work of the Met Office's Hadley Centre enables government and other decision makers to formulate policy for the future; this conference is a crucial part of that process."

The Director of the Hadley Centre, Dr Dave Griggs, said "This is an ideal opportunity for the scientific community to identify emission levels, especially of carbon dioxide, at which the Earth's climate could be thrown into irreversible change."

Notes:
The Met Office Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research is the UK's leading centre for climate research and is based in Exeter.

For further information:
Met Office Press Office +44 (0)1392 886655
E-mail: pressoffice@metoffice.gov.uk

Met Office Customer Centre 0870 900 0100
If you're outside the UK +44 (0)1392 885680

Defra Press Office +44 (0)20 7238 5599

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